Even If We Obliterated North Vietnam, P. 2

First Eliminate the Opposition, And Then Hold Free Elections?

"We will remain in Vietnam until conditions permit genuinely free elections."
—Humphrey at the National Press Club, March 11

"You know what we are going to have for elections over there is when there are not any Viet Cong left to vote, and then we are going to call those free elections."
—Senator Morse to Prof. A. Doak Barnett at the Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing, March 8.

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Those Who Would Also Die, Have A Right to Be Consulted

Why de Gaulle Wants NATO Bases Out of France

In Elie Abel's book, "The Missile Crisis," there is a story which may help us to understand why de Gaulle wants a change in France's relations with NATO. Mr. Abel adds a graphic and revealing story to our knowledge of Dean Acheson's special trip to Paris at the time. It was his task, as Presidential emissary, to let de Gaulle know that the U.S. was ready for a nuclear confrontation with the Soviet Union unless its nuclear missiles were removed from Cuba. Mr. Abel relates that before Acheson could deliver the message de Gaulle "raised his hand in a delaying gesture that the long departed Kings of France might have envied" and asked, "May we be clear before you start. Are you consulting or informing me?" Acheson confessed that he was there "to inform, not consult." Yet if the missiles had not been removed and if nuclear war had begun, France would at once have been drawn in. U.S.-controlled NATO bases on French soil would have gone into action and been the targets of Soviet attack. France might have found itself crippled or destroyed within a few hours or days because of a distant conflict in the Caribbean in which she had little interest and on which neither France nor any other NATO ally—not even England, as Abel's book also shows—had been consulted. An alliance in which the life and death of all may be decided by the will of one member, is not an alliance. It is a form of empire.

It Depends On Whose Ox Is Expropriated

Khrushchev did not consult his allies of the Warsaw Pact before taking the risky step of putting the missiles into Cuba. Kennedy did not consult his allies of the Atlantic Pact before deciding he would risk a thermonuclear world war to get them out. The fate of Europe, East and West, was in the hands of two outside powers, America and Russia. Neither in other circumstances would allow one of its allies to embark on a course which might draw it into a world war; both even joined hands in effect to force English and French withdrawal from the Suez when Egypt seized the Canal from its Anglo-French owners. Neither power thought the seizure worth the risk of a world war; neither American nor Russian interests were directly affected. Both were more concerned with the friendship (and oil) of the Arab world than with the financial loss to England and France. We have twice risked wider war over Cuba (at the Bay of Pigs and in the missile crisis) rather than negotiate Cuba's seizure of United Fruit Company land and oil company refineries. But the English and French governments were forced to negotiate compensation as best they could with Nasser. It was the Suez crisis which gave major impetus before de Gaulle to French development of an independent nuclear deterrent so it would not be completely at the mercy of its great ally, the United States. This is what American opinion refuses to see.

France was not consulted when the U.S. teetered on the brink of using nuclear arms against China in the Korean war and risking a world war with Russia. France was not consulted on Cuba. France is not being consulted today on Vietnam, though the widening of that war, too, might engulf France. This is what de Gaulle said at his last press conference (Feb. 21):

. . . while the prospects of a world war breaking out on account of Europe are dissipating, conflicts in which America engages in other parts of the world—as the day before yesterday in Korea, yesterday in Cuba, today in Vietnam—risk, by virtue of that famous escalation, being extended so that the result could be a general conflagration. In that case Europe—whose strategy is, within NATO, that of America—would be automatically involved in the struggle, even when it would not have so desired

(Continued on Page Four)

U Thant's Quietly Anguished Appeal

'The Secretary General is deeply concerned over the escalation of the fighting in Vietnam and the mounting casualties and the destruction there. He feels that any move to bring the parties closer to negotiation must include the following:

"(1) Cessation of the bombing of North Vietnam. (2) Substantial reduction by all parties of all military activities in South Vietnam. (3) The participation of the National Liberation Front (Vietcong) in any peaceful settlement."

—Statement by U Thant at UN Headquarters, New York March 9 and given scant attention by U. S. press.

We suggest that peace groups might be well advised to use U Thant's statement as their peace pledge. It links settlement with UN leadership which Johnson has invoked and ignored. The U.S. is doing the exact opposite of what U Thant advises—it is intensifying the bombing of the North, it is steadily increasing its military activity in the South and it is moving further away from recognition of the NLF.

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What Country in the World Most Needs to Be Contained? . . .

Containment But Not Isolation—There is only one nation on earth which has military bases on every inhabited continent and a fleet in every open sea. Its nuclear armed submarines and surface warships patrol the Atlantic, the Pacific, the Caribbean, the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean. It is the only nation which keeps nuclear armed bombers flying on alert thousands of miles from its own skies, as the bombs accidentally dropped on Spain revealed. Such a nation, its guns cocked to visit instant death on any other country of which it disapproves, presents a world problem. Were its destructive power to fall into irresponsible hands, it could render much of the earth uninhabitable. We can imagine no nation to which the doctrine of containment more aptly applies. The No. 1 problem of humanity is to contain the United States. But we are against its isolation. America's vast power makes it difficult for the United Nations to operate as it should, but we would strongly oppose its exclusion from the UN. The only hope of mellowing its ethnocentric views and strong-arm habits is to bring it more fully into the council of nations. Containment but not isolation—that seems to us the perfect formula.

What We Fear Most in South Vietnam: Over and over again the President has assured us that we are only in South Vietnam to see that no government is imposed upon its people against their will. But every time, as now in the wake of General Thi's ouster, they demand restoration of civilian and representative rule, a thrill of horror runs through our bureaucracy, as if such thoughts were indecent. For 12 years we have been South Vietnam's paymaster and military protector. In all that time we have imposed one military dictatorship after another upon its people. General Thi is popular because he was the only member of the ruling military clique who had ever risked his neck in a struggle against despotism; he staged an unsuccessful uprising against Diem and had to take refuge in Cambodia. He allowed students and Buddhists —the majority faith—some freedom of expression in his area of command. That's just why U.S. agencies hailed his removal as a step toward greater stability. The recurrent nightmare of the U.S. embassy is what to do if some day, somehow, the people of South Vietnam erect a government of their own choosing and ask us to leave so they can negotiate peace with the Viet Cong. This is why we fear nothing more deeply in South Vietnam than the democracy we claim to be defending.

Mindless Toughness But: The most fascinating aspect of the opinion poll on the Vietnamese war by seven Stanford social scientists is the glimpse into the complexities of U.S. popular thinking, or lack of it. For this poll shows that unthinking tough-guy attitudes dominate popular views toward Cuba, China and Russia. Little Cuba especially seems to bring out the bully in us; 64% even of those who favor negotiating our way out of the Vietnam war think we have been "too soft" and only 3% think we have been "too tough" on Cuba. We're not quite as ready to be as tough with China (it's too big). Of those who oppose negotiation, 68% thought us "too soft" on China; of those for negotiating, 49% thought us "too soft" and only 3% "too tough." Toward Russia, with atom bombs as big as ours, the public's attitude is not quite as tough—only 51% of those against negotiation thought we were "too soft" on Russia as against 46% of those who favored negotiation. But despite these "tough guy" attitudes, 88% of the adult population favors negotiation with the Viet Cong; 70% would support a UN-negotiated truce; 54% favor free elections in South Vietnam, even if the Viet Cong might win and 52% would be willing to see the Viet Cong participate in a coalition government in South Vietnam. Much of this may be due to the Robert Kennedy statement, which was made on Feb. 19, before the poll began. It shows public

Even If North Vietnam Were Obliterated?

Mr. MAHON (D. Tex): Do you believe we can win the war in South Vietnam solely by the bombing of North Vietnam?

Secretary McNAMARA: Not just by bombing the North. This view is not shared by all, but it is certainly my strong personal opinion.

Mr. MAHON: If you could persuade the people in North Vietnam to stop their aggression in South Vietnam, wouldn't you by bombing North Vietnam achieve victory?

Secretary McNAMARA: I do not believe that so long as the Viet Cong advance militarily in the south, any amount of bombing in the north will cause North Vietnam to call off the aggression in the south.

Mr. MAHON: If we adopted a policy, and a program, for the obliteration, for all practical purposes, of North Vietnam, would that end the war?

Secretary McNAMARA: In my opinion it will not completely stop the North Vietnamese support of the operations in South Vietnam. Most of the arms and ammunition is provided by other Communist countries.

(Discussion off the record)

Mr. MAHON: That is a matter of opinion, of course. General Wheeler [Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff], do you believe that the practical obliteration of North Vietnam would successfully end the war in South Vietnam?

Gen. WHEELER: I doubt it, sir. . . .

—Testimony (pps. 32-3) before the House Appropriations Committee in executive session Jan. 26 five days before the bombing of the north was resumed; the censored hearings were not released until March 11.

What Generals Like Taylor Forget When They Talk of Mining Haiphong

". . . the ease with which military solutions are talked up for every American difficulty in the Far East. . . . Yesterday for example, we heard again, but this time from an Administration confidant, the proposal that we mine the North Vietnamese harbor at Haiphong. With Americans, mining the harbor . . . sounds neat and sanitary and seems to avoid the messy elements of war that are distressing to watch on TV screens. But no one has mentioned the fact that every Navy that has minelayers also has minesweepers. . . . I cannot imagine Soviet freighters going through a mine field without the Soviet Navy first trying to get rid of the mines. . . . Is this minelaying something we would have to keep going back to, to do over and over, while the Chinese or Russians kept sweeping them out? At what point would American Navy vessels begin intercepting the mine sweepers? . . . Putting mines anywhere around Haiphong is going to mean confrontations at some point with nations whose vessels are sunk. . . . What would be American response to a mine laid by China or Russia in the Gulf of St. Lawrence?" *—Morse, March 7*

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. . . The Rusk-McNamara "Big Lie" Equating Mao With Hitler

opinion fluid, and much more ready than the Administration to deal with the men we are fighting. The obstacle is in the White House, not in the country.

Vietnam and Watts: The fresh outbreak of racial rioting in Los Angeles makes especially pertinent the poll's findings on how the public feels about the war and domestic spending. The majority have reservations about continuing the war when faced with its possible costs: 79% oppose cutting aid to education if necessary to continue the war; two-thirds oppose cutting medicare; two-thirds oppose raising taxes; majorities also oppose introducing economic controls or cutting back the war on poverty. Education and the war on poverty seem to have the strongest support. Even those who approve Johnson's handling of the war are 78% opposed to any cut in education to meet increased costs, and only 46% of them would favor cutting the war on poverty in order to continue the fighting. Obviously Johnson's old Southern Senator friends are not very representative.

The Big Lie: The consistent pattern of the Johnson Administration has been to cloak the buildup for ever bigger war with fresh talk about peace. Now it has picked up the "containment, but not isolation" line from the professors appearing before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. This line itself reflects the unwillingness of the academic establishment on China policy to break too openly with the Administration. The McCarthy years have left behind a residue of timidity and the academics interlock with the government; many are well-paid consultants, others enjoy security clearance, still others hope for government jobs, some commute between Washington and Academia; all look for support to government grants and the largesse of the great Foundations, which are part of the establishment. So the witnesses so far have been afraid to oppose the war, and to depart too far from official clichés. Their most important contribution has been to dispute the official U.S. interpretation of the Lin Piao statement as a Chinese *Mein Kampf*. The experts, on the contrary, term it a warning to the rebels in Vietnam and elsewhere that they can expect little help from China and are on their own. Rusk and McNamara are guilty of unscrupulous and inflammatory propaganda when they portray the Lin Piao statement as a blueprint for world conquest and equate Mao with Hitler. One test of Administration sincerity in claiming that it seeks a modus vivendi with China is whether it abandons this Goebbels-style Big Lie.

LBJ and Agrarian Reform: The most striking omission from President Johnson's statement on the fifth anniversary of the Alliance for Progress was any mention of land reform, no small oversight in dealing with a largely peasant and land-hungry area. The statement hails "most hopeful signs" of " a renewal of large-scale private investment in Latin American development." No doubt talk of agrarian reform is being soft-pedalled lest it discourage investors. Dan Kurzman reported in the *Washington Post* (March 13) from Guatemala City that Julio Cesar Mendez Montenegro, the only civilian candidate permitted to run in its presidential election and the one who got the highest vote, would be allowed to take office after private assurances to the military and the large landowners. The largest of these, of course, and by far, is our United Fruit Company, which got the CIA to overthrow Arbenz and restore its land 12 years ago.

McCarthyism In The Poverty Program

The Office of Economic Opportunity's new "Personnel Policies and Procedures" for the Community Action Program could rule out employment of many people the "war on poverty" is designed to reach. The section on "Standards for Selections" says: "Recent conviction of a crime involving moral turpitude shall be considered strong evidence of failure to meet these standards." In Washington alone, two community action groups were recently formed exclusively of men who had been in trouble with the police. "What do we do now," wondered one local poverty official, "ask them to get out of the war on poverty?" This same provision might be used in the South against those arrested in connection with civil rights demonstrations. A rule against membership in "subversive" organizations includes a reference to "manifestations of disloyalty to the United States." Will this bar people who oppose the war in Vietnam? The principle danger in the guidelines is their vagueness. "What does 'subversive' mean or 'crimes involving moral turpitude'?" asked one high poverty program official. The language, he said, is so vague "that just about anybody could be excluded."

—P.O.

Why There Was So Disappointing A Turnout in The Poverty Board Elections

Sargent Shriver's March 8 assessment of community elections of the poor to anti-poverty boards was accurate. They have been a failure. Of seven elections to date, only one, in Huntsville, Ala., attracted more than 10% of the eligible voters. Elections in Chester and Philadelphia, Pa., Boston, Cleveland, Kansas City and Los Angeles have drawn an average of barely 3.5%. Mr. Shriver's reluctance to hold further elections, however, is premature. The reason for the low turnouts is not—as some editorials have suggested—the apathy of the poor (though this is certainly a problem). Underlying the election failures are a complex of factors, some political, others simply mechanical.

In Los Angeles, for example, less than 1% of the electorate of 400,000 went to the polls March 1. "The poor have now had an opportunity to be heard," said the Wash. Star (Mar. 5) "obviously . . . impassioned civil rights advocates have grossly overstated their case." In fact, planning for the LA vote was so poor, that a larger showing would have been surprising. From a budget of $61,000 only $5000 was spent on "communications." The bulk of the money went to poll watchers and vote counters in the 154 school buildings spread over a 4000 sq. mile area. At least one reliable observer reported that inadequate provisions were made for transporting voters the long distances many had to travel. Although a number of the voters were Spanish-speaking, none of the official campaign literature was printed in Spanish. Finally, as one Watts resident noted, the election was held on the day welfare checks came. Most women were busy watching for the mailman or shopping.

For months, politicians had been deriding the importance of the outcome. "It's a shame to take the time and energy of so many people," said Mayor Sam Yorty. One Los Angeles County supervisor remarked the election was "obviously masterminded by political offices which hoped to control the poor." As evidence, the districts were so gerrymandered that Watts was denied a full representative. In the end, few of the poor believed their vote would make any impact on the poverty program. *—Peter Osnos*

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One Point on Which All Our NATO Allies Secretly Agree With de Gaulle

Continued from Page One

. . . France's determination to dispose of herself . . . is incompatible with a defense organization in which she finds herself subordinate.

De Gaulle is not asking the end of the Atlantic Pact. He is asking the removal of NATO bases which are not under French control so that war may be made from them without French permission. In this he is not asking for more than we long ago granted Franco. The Spanish dictator allows U.S. bases on Spanish soil only under a bilateral agreement which gives Spain a veto over the use of those bases for war. The crafty Franco used Axis aid to seize power, and then gave the Axis no more than token support in the last war. He is still free to treat us the same way if we got involved in a conflict which he considered of no interest to Spain.

When NATO Was Anti-Colonialist

The removal of NATO bases will leave France free to stand aside if the Vietnamese war widens into war with China. In this respect the politics of NATO has come full circle. Most Americans have forgotten why the pact between us and Western Europe was called a *North* Atlantic treaty and limited to the North Atlantic. Secretary of State Acheson made clear that he did not intend to obligate the United States to help our North Atlantic allies to maintain their possessions elsewhere in the world. The only non-European territory covered was Algeria. Neither the third of Africa which was then French, nor Indochina, where war had been raging for three years, was covered. When France five years later asked our aid to save Dienbienphu, she could not invoke NATO. But now we are trying to use NATO in the Far East. McNamara sought to drum up feeling against China at the last NATO Council meeting. The NATO powers are being pressed to send aid to Vietnam. De Gaulle on the other hand is cultivating friendly relations with China as well as Russia and continues to warn us that no military solution is possible in Vietnam. "Lacking the ability—which is a matter of means —but also the will—which is a matter of conscience," he said of Vietnam at his last press conference, "to wipe out all resistance to the ends of the earth, there is no way of putting an end to this war other than by concluding peace." He sees the path to peace as reconvening of the Geneva conference, "an end to all foreign intervention in Vietnam" and "consequently, neutrality of the country." This implies the end of a separate South Vietnam as an American protectorate and reunification of the country independently of all the great Powers. De Gaulle ended by saying "it must be acknowledged that this road is not being taken." De Gaulle, by freeing France from NATO bases, is telling us that if the road we are taking leads to a wider war France may sit it out.

Mr. Abel reports that after Acheson told de Gaulle he was not there to consult him about the Cuban missile crisis, de Gaulle replied dryly, "I am in favor of independent decisions." He told Acheson, "You may tell your President that France will support him. I think that under the circumstances President Kennedy had no other choice. This is his national prerogative and France understands." But in Vietnam and in dealing with China, de Gaulle thinks we have other and wiser choices than the course we are pursuing. He is clearing the decks so that this time he can exercise *his* "national prerogative" and he, too, can make independent decisions. Since 1958 de Gaulle has been trying unsuccessfully to establish machinery for consultation inside NATO. This is his declaration of independence. It is a protest, with which all our West European allies secretly sympathize, against the possibility of annihilation without representation.

Somebody Likes Rusk—An Accolade to Soapy

Johannesburg, South Africa — The pro-Government newspaper Vaderland today expressed the hope that the U.S. will appoint someone outside the ranks of "leftist intelligentsia" to succeed G. Mennen Williams as Under Secretary of State for African Affairs. It said, "We will not wipe away tears or rejoice in his departure because if his successor comes from the ranks of the Leftist intelligentsia swarming in multiplex African institutes or organizations in the United States, it will be a case of one worse than another. We just hope Mr. Williams' successor will be someone who will behave with the same responsibility in the field of relations between nations as the vast majority of American policy leaders such as Mr. Dean Rusk."

—United Press International ticker March 9

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